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BLISTER RUST NEWS SERVICE

Clip Sheet No. 12.

(To be released April 21, 1924.)

Wild currants and gooseberries cause blister rust infection on white pines. These bushes are the first shrubs in leaf and are easily seen at this time. Look for them in and around your white pine stands. Their systematic destruction will protect your trees from blister rust damage.

Plan to get in touch with the blister rust control agent in your county through the local farm bureau during Forest Protection Week, and arrange for the protection of your pines this spring. White pine blister rust is causing serious losses in unprotected pine stands in the northeastern states. They can be protected against this destructive disease by uprooting all wild and cultivated currant and gooseberry bushes within 900 feet of the trees. Prompt action by pine owners will prevent further losses.

By good authorities it is held that white pine is the most profitable crop possible on large areas of New England. In the Northeastern States, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, the white pine blister rust is present, and planters of white pine should protect it from this disease by destroying all wild and cultivated currants and gooseberries within 900 feet of the plantation. These bushes are the alternate hosts of the blister rust and if permitted to remain near native or planted white pines in regions where the blister rust is prevalent, the trees become diseased and gradually die. Usually the cost of uprooting wild currant and gooseberry bushes is small.

(Extract from Farmers Bulletin #1117).

Now is the time to watch for the blister rust on white pines. Owners should examine their pines frequently for this destructive disease during the next month. It can be recognized by the bright orange-yellow blisters which burst through the diseased bark. These blisters are about the size of a navy bean. They break open and liberate millions of spores which are scattered by the wind. When the spores fall on currant or gooseberry bushes they cause a rust on the under side of the leaves. This rust produces more spores which are blown back to the pine and cause new infections. The disease does not spread from pine to pine. By eradicating the currant and gooseberry bushes within 900 feet of trees, pine owners can prevent further damage from the rust. If it is attacking your pine trees ask the blister rust control agent in your county about the best methods of applying control measures.

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It is generally conceded that white pine, because of its excellent qualities and many and diversified uses, is our most valuable timber tree. For a considerable number of these uses white pine has been the first choice, as it always will be if obtainable. Many woods have been substituted for it but few have proved as satisfactory. Inroads on the white pine stands by lumbering and fire have been enormous, so that today the annual cut is far less than the demand and is diminishing each year.

On average quality forest soil which could not profitably be used for agriculture, white pine either self-sown or planted will, in 40 to 50 years, produce a gross revenue of over \$200 per acre, as contrasted with \$75 per acre if the land grows only hardwoods. Unless the blister rust is kept under control, however, it may and probably will, destroy the pine before it reaches merchantable size.

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